

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ACCRA 02743 071703Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 PC-01 DOE-15

SOE-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /107 W

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O R 070408Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3051

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMDEBASSY LOME 2873

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 2743

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PGOV, GH

SUBJ: STRIKE UPDATE

REF: ACCRA 2672

1. SUMMARY: SOME PROFESSIONALS ARE ON STRIKE BUT OTHERS ARE NOT. ELECTRICITY, WATER AND GASOLINE ARE AVAILABLE AS OF AFTERNOON APRIL 7 AND ACCRA REMAINS CALM. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS STILL A GOOD DEAL OF HARSH CRITICISM, PARTICULARLY AMONG ELITE, OF ACHEAMPONG REGIME FOR ALLEGEDLY RIGGING MARCH 30 REFERENDUM. ARRESTS OF DISSIDENT LEADERS ON APRIL 6 SUGGEST POTENTIAL FOR CLASHES OR MORE SERIOUS STRIKES REMAINS HIGH. END SUMMARY.

2. IN GHANA IT IS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO TELL WHETHER PEOPLE ARE ON STRIKE, ON VACATION OR ARE WORKING A NORMAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ACCRA 02743 071703Z

SCHEDULE. AS OF AFTERNOON APRIL 7, ENGINEERS HAVE NOT RPT NOT GONE ON STRIKE AND THUS UTILITIES AND GASOLINE ARE AVAILABLE. LAWYERS ARE ON STRIKE BUT JUDGES ARE ON DUTY AND CASES ARE TO BE HEARD ON SCHEDULE IF PARTICIPANTS DESIRE. IF LAWYERS FAIL TO APPEAR, CASES MAY BE DROPPED TO BOTTOM OF DOCKET AND/OR LAWYERS SUED BY CLIENTS FOR THEIR NON-APPEARANCE. LATER INFORMATION SUGGESTS DOCTORS ARE

NOT RPT NOT ON STRIKE, AS REPORTED REFTEL: GHANA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION URGED THEM TO LEAVE BUT MANY STAYED IN HOSPITALS OR CONTINUED TO SEE PATIENTS ON A PRIVATE BASIS. ACCORDING TO AN AMERICAN DOCTOR, NURSES ASSOCIATION HAS APPEALED TO NURSES TO RETURN TO WORK AND ON MORNING APRIL 7 ABOUT HALF OF NORMAL NURSING STAFF WAS ON DUTY AT KORLE BU HOSPITAL.

3. CONDITIONS AT UNIVERSITY OF GHANA'S LEGON CAMPUS ARE ALSO CONFUSED. TEACHERS AT LEGON REPORTEDLY HAVE VOTED TO GO ON STRIKE. STUDENTS WERE TO RETURN TO CAMPUS APRIL 7. MANY WERE ALREADY ON CAMPUS BUT ARE NOT ATTENDING CLASSES. THEY MAY, OR MAY NOT, GET BACK TO WORK ON NEXT FRIDAY, APRIL 14, BUT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DO SO IF TEACHERS ARE ON STRIKE THEN. AT LEAST SOME STUDENTS ARE FURIOUS WITH ACHEAMPONG REGIME -- A RECENT FLYER FROM SELF-STYLED "REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH LEAGUE" CLAIMED THAT UNION GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN DEFEATED IN REFERENDUM, CALLED ON ACHEAMPONG TO RESIGN AND URGED "EVERY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC TO ARM THEMSELVES WITH ANY WEAPON THEY LAY HANDS ON FOR SELF-DEFENSE." THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS, HOWEVER, WHILE NOT FANS OF THIS REGIME, HAVE REMAINED QUIET AND ARE NOT LIKELY TO RESORT TO VIOLENCE AT THIS TIME.

4. ARRESTS OF EIGHT OR MORE ANTI-UNION GOVERNMENT DISSIDENTS ON APRIL 6 HAS ANGERED OPPOSITION. SOME MEMBERS OF ELITE HAVE BEEN OUTSPOKEN (DURING PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ACCRA 02743 071703Z

EMBOFFS) IN ATTACKING ACHEAMPONG'S HANDLING OF REFERENDUM AND HIS CRACKDOWN ON PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT FOR FREEDOM AND JUSTICE (PMFJ) AND OTHER GROUPS OPPOSED TO HIM. AN APRIL 6 HANDOUT, SOURCED TO PROFESSIONALS' ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP BUT NOT SO IDENTIFIED, CLAIMS PMFJ LEADER LT. GEN. A.A. AFRIFA HAS BEEN ARRESTED, BUT WE THINK HE IS STILL AT LARGE AND MAY BE TRYING TO LEAVE GHANA OVERLAND. UNCONFIRMED REPORTS ALSO SPEAK OF ARREST OF A STUDENT LEADER AND OF PROF ADU-BOAHENE, HEAD OF HISTORY DEPT AT LEGON. SOME OF THESE DETAINEES ARE REPORTEDLY BEING SENT TO PRISONS UP-COUNTRY, RATHER THAN BEING HELD IN ACCRA AREA; THIS RAISES POSSIBILITY THEY MAY BE IMPRISONED FOR MORE THAN A FEW DAYS.

5. ON LEGAL FRONT, MEMBERS OF GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION HAVE HAD WRITS SERVED ON ELECTORAL COMMISSION CHALLENGING LEGALITY OF REFERENDUM OUTCOME. HOWEVER, PROSPECTS FOR SUITS ARE UNCERTAIN AND PROCESS WILL DOUBTLESS BE LENGTHY; THUS CRITICS OF REGIME CANNOT HOPE FOR SPEEDY LEGAL REDRESS. SPATE OF ARRESTS MAY WELL MAKE LAWYERS AND OTHER DISSIDENTS MOVE CAUTIOUSLY LEAST THEY END UP IN PRISON, TOO. GOG SUPPORTERS HAVE ALSO FILED COUNTER-SUITS AGAINST FORMER

ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER ABBAN FOR ALLEGEDLY MISHANDLING
REFERENDUM ARRANGEMENTS.

6. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS, INFLUENTIAL TRADE UNION
CONGRESS (TUC) HAS DECLARED IT WILL CONTINUE TO BACK RULING
SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL AND "WILL NOT ASSOCIATE ITSELF...WITH
ANY PERSON OR GROUP OF PERSONS WANTING TO
DISRUPT THE COUNTRY'S PEACEFUL TRANSITIONAL PERIOD."
TUC SECRETARY GENERAL A.M. ISSIFU SAID TUC ACCEPTS ELECTORAL
COMMISSIONER QUAYE'S REPORT ON REFERENDUM AS AUTHENTIC
AND GENUINE. THIS FORMAL COMMITMENT BY TUC MUST DISAPPOINT
PROFESSIONALS, WHO HOPED TO ATTRACT TUC TO THEIR SIDE,
AND IT TENDS TO STRENGTHEN ACHEAMPONG'S POSITION. HOWEVER,
THERE IS STILL A GOOD DEAL OF ILL-WILL HERE TOWARD ACHEAMPONG
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PAGE 04 ACCRA 02743 071703Z

FOR MISMANAGEMENT OF ECONOMY, ALLEGED RIGGING OF REFERENDUM,
AND ARREST OF OPPOSITION LEADERS. THUS DESPITE PRESENT
CALM, POTENTIAL FOR CLASHES OR MORE SERIOUS STRIKES REMAINS
HIGH.
SMITH

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